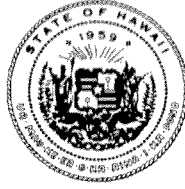


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May 15, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Purchase of Services Applicants

FROM: Amy Tsark, Acting Administrator
Social Services Division 

SUBJECT: ADDENDUM #2 TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL HMS 301-45 ISSUED
APRIL 27, 2006

Attached for your information is an addendum #2 to the Request for Proposal HMS 301-45 that was issued on April 27, 2006, by the Social Services Division of the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the addendum #2 is to make corrections to the RFP.

If you have questions regarding this RFP, please contact Suzanne Hull at 586-5669. Thank you for your interest in this procurement.

Attachments

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

ADDENDA FOR RFP HMS 301-45 ISSUED 4/27/2006
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Inquiry 1

1. Page 2-5—"Funding for any given year or for the contract as a whole may increase up to 300% of the original amount without being considered a fundamental change." Our researchers inform us that in federal practice a change that triples the value of a competed contract would be "outside the scope" of the contract and would be illegal. In state practice under 103D, a change (or the aggregate of changes) may not exceed 10% of the original contract value for services contracts. And if this were considered to be an ID/IQ contract, an incorrect clause is being applied. Can you please provide the information that clarifies how an increase up to 300% is not a fundamental change under Hawaii procurement law?

In the RFP Orientation session on May 4, 2006, DHS staff stated that it was common practice to put such clauses in innovative service contracts. There may be some confusion between what is legal in for-bid competitive contracts and what is legal for non-competitive contracts.

Response - This RFP is being conducted according to the rules established under Chapter 103F, HRS. The RFP language as it is currently written, is in compliance with this chapter.

Once a contract is awarded pursuant to this RFP, should the need arise to consider any increases in funding, due consideration will be given to desired increases in service provisions and funding amounts.

2. Page 2-3—Define "ohana" in the case where a child has been with a general license foster family for a period of time, that the child would identify the general license foster family as Ohana and the foster family would qualify to be child specific foster parents.

Response – 'Ohana means family and refers to the child's birth family or family of origin. It comprises the child's extended family, i.e., all individuals related by blood or by marriage to the child's birth parents and siblings and may also include—within the Hawaiian tradition—certain non-relatives whom the family considers to be part of their 'ohana. In all cases within this RFP, it refers to relationships that were established and existed prior to the child's coming into care. While it is not unheard of for a resource family to eventually be accepted

into a child's 'ohana (usually upon reunification), it is the birth family that confers that status not the resource family.

3. Page 2-3—Will you be providing a job description for the “resource” family to include their responsibility to the birth family after reunification? Will they receive board payment? Will they be covered by liability insurance? How will they be monitored and what are the expectations of the continued mentoring?

Response - The term “job description” implies an employment relationship between the Department and the resource family. No such relationship exists or is intended to exist. An explanation of the term “resource family” can be found in the professional literature. The Department has also sponsored several training sessions on each island where experts from the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning and AdoptUSKids have explored the notion in considerable detail. Continued engagement with the birth family following reunification flows from the resource family's success in actively supporting the child's birth family during the period of foster care. Resource families will not receive a board payment for continued engagement with the birth family once the child has returned home. As a vital member of the treatment team, they may be called upon (either by the birth family or by the caseworker) to assist in supporting the child's successful adjustment to his or her return home.

4. Page 2-5—Who is the bonus amount being paid to? 60 days from when? Who will track and report? Who will determine if a child has successfully reached his or her permanency goal?

Response - The bonus amount will be paid to the successful bidder. The Department and the successful bidder will jointly develop a tracking system to verify the length of time from initial application it takes to fully license a resource family. The Department shall determine if a child has successfully reached his or her permanency goal.

5. Page 2-6—Is there a reason training staff (#5) only includes relative caregivers as a required member of staff and not general licensed caregivers as well? What is meant by “reflect the range of ethnic communities”? Will this requirement be meant by one person who is a mix of a multitude of ethnicities or must it be individual people who participate in the culture of a particular ethnicity that they consider their dominant ethnicity?

Response – This requirement is not meant to exclude general-licensed caregivers, but rather to ensure that relative caregivers are represented in the complement of co-trainers utilized by the successful bidder. The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP) requires that “the State has in place a process for diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.” Currently, the distribution of ethnicity among

resource families does not successfully mirror the distribution of ethnicity among the children placed in foster care or freed for adoption. The divergence is greatest for those children of Native Hawaiian or mixed parentage. Conversely, Caucasian resource families are over-represented in the pool of resource families compared to the proportion of Caucasian children placed in foster care. A primary goal of this procurement is to develop a pool of resource families that enables the Department to meet the PIP requirement stated above. The goal will be met when the ethnic composition of the pool of potential foster and adoptive families accurately reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of children in Hawaii for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

6. Page 2-6--#6—What is the Department’s policies and philosophy regarding the role, ethnic composition and cultural competency of resource families?

Response - The Department is adhering to the Federal Government’s PIP goal: “The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in Hawaii for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed (increase the Native Hawaiian foster and adoptive homes).” 52% of the children in foster care are Native Hawaiian.

7. Page 2-8—Scope of Work--#2 and page 2-12, #8—how does this differ from the case management work of the social worker?

Response –The RFP envisions a collaborative relationship wherein the successful offeror will provide an enhanced array of services in coordination with DHS staff and other stakeholders.

It should also be noted that the applicant must make the full range of services (search, recruitment, training, support, retention, and renewal) available both for those families seeking to be licensed to care for a specific child or children (particularly relatives) and for those families seeking general certification or approval as a foster or adoptive parent.

8. Page 2-14--#4—Newsletter—since this is to provide topics of interest to foster parents, is it a duplication of a service that is already being provided by E Pulama Na Keiki, which provides topics of interest to foster parents? If it is not a duplication or service, what additional information and topics will be in the proposed newsletter?

Response – Rather than a duplication of E Pulama Na Keiki, the Department views the proposed newsletter as a supplement to existing publications and a golden opportunity to foster closer cooperation between the School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the social agencies serving families and children, and the community of resource families throughout the islands. We view the newsletter as an opportunity to educate the community about best practices and to

respond to the resource families' expressed need for information, training and ongoing support to assist them in fulfilling their role as a member of the treatment team.

– The content of the subject newsletter, as described in the RFP, will be a collaborative product with the exact content/format (ideally including electronic distribution/availability) to be determined. Any number of organizations publish newsletters or similar products which are directed toward similar audiences.

9. Page 2-20—Are packets going to only be sent to families who inquire? Last year, we sent over 1,000 welcome packets to child specific foster parents. This notified them of the trainings and also provided them with useful info they needed since the kids were already in their home.

Response - The contractor is expected to be responsive to the full range of families with a potential for becoming resource families (either general or child-specific); ranging from casual interest/initial contact throughout the continuum of recruitment, licensure and post-placement needs, including distribution of printed materials deemed necessary and appropriate in collaboration with the Department..

Page 2-20--#6 - is the contractor responsible for ongoing training? What is considered “ongoing training?” How will the contractor know if families received ongoing training?

Response - The contractor could either directly coordinate the training or subcontract it to another agency while still having oversight. The ongoing trainings would need to be coordinated with DHS-Staff Development Office, the UH Training Academy, the local Foster Care Training Committees, and the Resource Family Advisory Committee. Issues such as what is considered ongoing training, how will the contractor know if the families received ongoing training, etc. are issues that need to be addressed in the development of these services.

10. Page 2-20--#7—and what are considered “support services?”

Response – Support services to resource families includes specific provisions for an immediate response to potentially disruptive situations and specific skills training in cultural competency; the handling of emotional outbursts and acting-out behavior; responding to the child's and the birth family's sense of loss and failure; and dealing appropriately with issues of attachment and bonding.

11. Page 2-21--#4—what is a “relative search”? How is it to be conducted? How does the contractor get the information on which to base the relative search? When is a relative search considered “completed” for purposes of counting?

Response - The Department seeks maximum creativity and collaboration in locating relatives, both for potential placement options and maintaining ‘connections’. The contractor will be involved on an on-going case-specific basis and the decision as to when diligent search options are exhausted are can be influenced by

any number of stakeholders. Search activities might include, but are not limited to, genealogical resources, commercial search, people-locate services and electronic databases.

12. Page 2-21--#6—is the contractor responsible for organizing, coordinating or providing ongoing training?

Response - Yes, all of the above, with the Department having review and approval authority over course and curricula content. Again, this item, as with the overall RFP concept, envisions maximum collaboration among community, governmental and academic stakeholders.

13. Page 2-22—Is the contractor responsible for tracking which foster parents are still active with the Department 15 months after licensure? What is meant by “approval?” And what is meant by “active?”

Response - The Department and the successful bidder will jointly develop a tracking system to verify the above. “Approval” means fully licensed/certified, i.e., eligible for Federal financial participation when a child is placed. “Active” means the resource family either has placement(s) in their home or are available for/awaiting placement(s).

14. Page 2-22—#2 and #3--Is the contractor responsible for getting the families to participate in Ohana conference? Are they supposed to track this? What level of interaction constitutes “actively facilitating” family visitation: phone, face-to-face, attendance at the visitation?

Response - The contractor is responsible for documenting items in Attachments A, B, C; with DHS being responsible for validating accuracy. The exact process of determining the measures will be negotiated/jointly developed.

15. Page 2-22--#5—How is information about ethnicity currently collected and counted? Which ethnicities are counted? Will ethnicity be tracked by individual or by household? Will an individual be counted in each ethnic category they fall in if they are multi-ethnic?

Response - The immediate need is for Native Hawaiian resource families, but the mix of foster children and or foster homes may shift in the future. Race/ethnicity data is based on, and controlled by Federally defined AFCARS definitions/guidelines. The goal remains to develop a pool of resource families which parallels the cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds of the foster care population.

16. Also, many of the statistics reported for children in foster care in Hawaii as “Native Hawaiian” are actually artificially inflated by the fact that census data groups Native Hawaiians in with “Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander” and can

include Filipino, Samoan, Tahitian, etc... ancestry. What are the actual levels of the children in foster care that are of native Hawaiian ancestry?

Response - The 52% statistic is derived from the Department's Child Protective Services System (CPSS). The report requested only Native Hawaiian children in foster care. This differs from some other Federal reports which would combine Hawaiians with other Pacific Islanders. FYI—Filipino would be in the Asian category.

17. What is the current budget and staffing level (pay rate, hours) within DHS to perform the services that this contract will replace or duplicate?

Response – No current DHS staff will be replaced or duplicated as a result of this contract.

18. What contracts with other organizations are being superseded by this RFP? Organization Name, Contact Person, Contact Information, Amount of Contract, Scope of Work, Terms.

Response – The current PRIDE contract with Hawaii Behavioral Health will be superseded by this RFP. Cynthia Curatalo is the Executive Director. She can be reached at (808)934-0108. The annual contract amount is \$839,000.00. Please contact Suzanne Hull at 586-5669 regarding the scope of work for this contract.

19. What is the level of access that will be granted to the contractor to the DHS database in order to retrieve information, update records, and perform analyses?

Response – No direct access is anticipated. Request for information will be authorized and coordinated for release by the Child Welfare Services Branch.

Inquiry 2

1. How does DHS reconcile the contract value of this proposal with the existing values assigned to the current contracts for PRIDE and CS training? It appears that the new labor assigned to CS work (home assessments, pre-licensing, renewals, etc.) was not factored into the designated funding. Without any other additional labor or activities the full service of 2014 families for just the recruitment, training, home assessment and pre-licensing work would be estimated at over 6 M. The additional labor required for other service activities also included would require a good deal more. Please clarify.

Response – As was stated at the Orientation meeting on this RFP, the figure mentioned in the RFP was derived by inflating the current contracts for foster parent recruitment and training by a factor of approximately 30%. Since the RFP proposes a new service delivery model for the full spectrum of services for

resource families, the Department has no baseline from which to project a theoretical contract value. Whether the theoretical range specified in the RFP is realistic will depend upon the specific proposals put forward in response to this RFP, the availability of funds from various funding streams (including matchable dollars to draw down Federal revenues), and the ingenuity of the various coalitions to capitalize on existing resources. The Department does anticipate receiving proposals whose projected expenses exceed the 1.4 million dollar figure mentioned in the RFP.

The Department also anticipates that there will be start-up problems and inevitable delays in getting the full service array we are requesting up and running, so the initial funding levels are likely to be less than when the project is fully operational. We also anticipate receiving responses that may propose a variety of funding methodologies, e.g., fee-for-service funding during the start-up phases and initial operations, switching perhaps to a capitation rate once reliable baselines have been established.

2. In general it would be helpful to have a financial breakdown for funding expectations as stated in the rfp within each category that follows:
 - a. Recruitment, training, pre-licensing, home assessments of general foster and/adopt homes;
 - b. Recruitment, training, pre-licensing, home assessments of all other resource families;
 - c. Support for permanency activities;
 - d. Resource family advisory committee;
 - e. Community building and resource collaborative work.

Would DHS please generalize percentages of funding for each?

Response - It is our expectation that the applicant will provide a financial breakdown for services a-e stated above.

3. How many DHS positions has DHS designated in the past for the non-training work associated with the licensing of CS homes statewide?

Response – All 25 Foster Home Certification Social Work positions provide non-training work associated with licensing CS homes statewide.

4. The current 18 hour PRIDE curriculum was condensed from 27 hours. Feedback from PRIDE trainers and from families is that the current time frame is not sufficient for the amount of material presented. When would trainers have the opportunity to infuse the additional training necessary to have any impact on the expected Outcomes 2, 3, and 4 of Form C?

Response - Foster Parent roles and responsibilities in working with birth parents and assisting with services such as visitation are covered in the Train the Trainers sessions. They are also informed that it is a case by case situation, and the worker

would discuss with them before committing the foster parent. The current provider stated that these issues are covered in the current curriculum and training.

5. What work done within this contract will increase the participation in 'Ohana conferences and increase the resource family's facilitation of family visitation? In what service area would this fall?

Response – This would fall under Recruitment, Training and On-Going Support. It is integral to the notion of a resource family's role in engaging and supporting the birth family. The resource family's participation in the initial 'Ohana conference will enable the extended family to get to know them and to establish the "parenting partnership" with the birth family. Issues of visitation can be dealt with from the very beginning and mutual expectations established. The resource family can make their commitment to maintaining connections with the child's birth family evident from the very beginning of the process. They can also contribute their expertise to the discussion of the best permanency alternative for the child.

These expectations of their role need to be made clear to resource families from the very beginning of the process when interest is first expressed. They need to be clarified and emphasized during the initial training cycle prior to certification and they need to be reinforced through on-going support and training.

6. Factors external to this RFP can have a cause and effect relationship on some of the Outcomes of Form C. For example: Reasons why participation in 'Ohana conferencing either increases or decreases cannot be controlled. Measurement of participation in 'Ohana Conferencing for this rfp cannot be directly effected and controlled by any service activity of this rfp. Please clarify.

Response – While there are external factors associated with the outcomes in Form C, the RFP seeks creativity and collaboration in program design to encourage and enhance outcomes for children and families. How an offeror proposes to address the desired outcomes will be a function of program design.

7. There is no mention of relative searches in the body of the Service Specifications. It appears only as a service activity in Form B. Which service area does this relate to?

Response – This refers to the recruitment service area. The proposed methodology must address the specific provisions the applicant will employ to assist in the identification of and search for the child's relatives on both the maternal and paternal sides who may potentially serve as a resource family or permanent placement for the child. The proposed methodology must include among the proposed techniques the use of commercial search and tracking databases and coordination with the Na Kupuna Council and other similar organizations with

access to genealogy records and other methods for identifying Native Hawaiian families.

8. Licensing renewals or reviews have also not been part of recruitment, training, home assessments and all pre-licensing work of PRIDE or CS contracts in the past. Please provide the context for how this work is to be done.

Response – This RFP envisages a new model of working with the social service agencies serving families and children within the community. The Department is not just looking to purchase a constellation of services; it desires to build community infrastructure and capacity to better respond to the needs of vulnerable families and children. Increasing the capacity of the network-as-a-whole to conduct home studies and assessments and sustaining the contact of the network with the family throughout their involvement with the system through on-going support, supplemental training, publication of the newsletter, etc., will enable the network as a whole to have a much deeper and more comprehensive understanding of a given family's ability to respond affirmatively to the needs of the children in need of a foster or adoptive placement. The successful applicant—through the collaborative it establishes—will have the most current and comprehensive perspective on the resource families' abilities and appropriateness for licensing renewal. As a partner in that collaborative, the Department will benefit from a more nuanced evaluation of the family's performance.

9. Please define the type of supportive interventions expected to sustain the child's placement (Service Activity #7). For example, is there an expectation that a provider send staff to a home in crisis? How many and what type of FTE positions are expected within the Supports for Permanency discussion in the Service Specifications? Does DHS expect to fund trainings for resource families with children placed as a measure of support from funds allowed through this contract?

Response - The Department again is seeking the creativity of offerors in program and system design and does wish to constrain offerors with minimum or maximum resource limits or dictate service delivery models. Offerors should consider collaborative use of existing public or private/community resources. Pricing of an offeror's proposal should include the cost of providing whatever interventions (including training) are envisioned if such costs are incremental to efforts otherwise included in their proposal.

10. Is this contract expected to provide the funding for statewide travel associated with the attendance at quarterly Advisory Committee meetings?

Response – Yes, pricing of an offeror's proposal should include travel costs and any associated logistical costs necessary to support the quarterly Advisory Committee meetings although use of various technology, such as video conferencing may be incorporated.

11. The rfp states on page 2-12 the inclusion of two foster youth or former foster youth during each training session. Please clarify if the word session was intended to mean cycle.

Response – Yes, the more precise terminology is “cycle”.

12. How does DHS plan to assist in the motivation of the CS families to attend training? Will there be incentives or penalties? How many CS families have had their license revoked due to the lack of attendance in the CS training in the last year?

Response – DHS is willing to work collaboratively to motivate CS families to attend training, but does not plan to mandate a system of ‘incentives or penalties,’ although the offeror is free to propose ‘incentives’ that they might wish to provide. In the past year 1 family has had their license revoked.

Inquiry 3

1. In reference to Outcome #3 how will the contractor have the ability to track the number of new resource families recruited pursuant to this RPP who actively facilitate family visitation?

Response - The Department of Human Services hopes that the tracking can be done through partnerships with the University of Hawaii School of Social Work and the Child Welfare Services Branch.

2. How many current positions exist within DHS on each island to fully license CS families?

Response - 25

3. Pls. provide a service specification for licensing renewals or reviews. How many of these services are expected to be provided within a year?

Response - Estimates per year: Oahu—529; East HI—110; West HI—120; Maui—100; Molokai—30; Lanai—6; Kauai—63 TOTAL STATEWIDE: 958

4. What is the current retention rate of foster families? How is that measured?

Response - The Department and the successful bidder will jointly develop a tracking system for this measure. This would appear to be an ideal opportunity for collaboration with the academic community to explore variables associated with retention and measurements.

5. Pls. provide the current backlog of CS homes. The understanding at the RFO was that it is higher than stated in the RFP.

Response - Best estimate provided by staff is 431 homes at this time. Please refer to the chart provided in the RFP.

6. Pls. define “application” in Outcomes 6 & 7.

Response – This is the date of documented intent to become a resource family.

Inquiry 4

1. What exactly is the backlog, please clarify.

Response - Best estimate provided by staff is 431 homes at this time. Please refer to the chart provided in the RFP.

2. Page 2-15, states that "preferably staff shall have a Master's Degree in Social Work...". Are we allowed to hire a Bachelor's level person?

Response - Please refer to the addenda to the RFP which addresses minimum requirements for individuals conducting trainings, home studies, etc. (pages 2-11, 2-13, 2-14).

3. What is the ratio of foster homes to adoptive homes?

Response - Foster parents (relative and non-relative) often become the adoptive parents or guardians. However, the percentage of foster homes which only intend to adopt is about 6%. These adoptive homes will be considered after reunification efforts or placement with relatives/kin are ruled out.

4. Will startup costs be included? Will we get reimbursed for any training/work done prior to contract start date?

Response - No start up costs will be allowed. A first quarter payment will be made to the awardee shortly after the execution of the contract that will cover training/work done prior to the start of the contract.

5. Page 2-9, what happens if we are unable to eliminate the current backlog with the first 9 months of the contract?

Response - The Department would want to hear from the provider why they were not able to address the backlog in the first nine months of the contract and establish a plan of action to eliminate the backlog.

6. What is the function/role of the advisory committee?

Response – As stated in the RFP, the function of the Resource Family Advisory Committee is to assist in identifying ongoing needs, facilitate communication, provide ongoing support, and disseminate performance data and other pertinent information to all interested stakeholders. It serves as a feedback mechanism for the Department and the successful applicant regarding issues of concern to the resource family community, helps to identify areas needing improvement or further clarification in the training modules, and generally offers an opportunity to “take the pulse” of the community.

Issues, Information & Suggestions from the Statewide CQI Council as related to Placement Stability:

Recruitment needs: homes for teens, teen mothers and their children (place together), children and youth with significant challenges (emotional, developmental, physical, etc.)
Crisis intervention services
24-hour access line
Improve access to SEBD in-home services (CWS working with CAMHD on this)
Increase Foster Parent access and participation to Ohana Conferencing
Consolidate and Enhance Resource Lists (Court Improvement will lead this effort)---but will need to be maintained/updated
Improve DHS website (Director’s office has been making improvements)
Foster youth informational workbook (HFYC is working on this)
Improve on Supervisor Training
Assess the availability of adequate CCSS services
EPIC is piloting 48-hour meeting between birth and foster family to establish connections and support reunification efforts, etc. (from Lorrie Lutz’s 7-day meeting model)
Continue to support community and faith-based efforts such as Kokua Ohana’s work with Ark of Safety and Waimanalo Hui---regarding Neighborhood Foster Care, Parenting classes, Support Groups, etc. –collaborating with community and faith-based organizations.
HFYC suggestions that may help with stability of foster placements: screen FPs on issues such as religion, food, race, sexual orientation, etc. for matching; consider pre-placement meetings between FPs and Foster youth such as sharing a meal and talking about expectations; have Foster Youth participate more in foster parent recruitment activities; more FP training on sexual identity issues; foster youth need DIRECT contact/access to their social workers—messages and phone numbers should be given directly to the youth; peer support groups for foster youth; explore concerns about ESH placements—settings are too restrictive, not family oriented, facilities are in poor condition; have a 24-hour call-in # where former foster youth can provide counseling (HFYC looking into this –perhaps partnering with Teen Line); HFYC youth trained to go out with SW and counsel youth and FP –at the point that the FP are requesting removal or youth considering running away (HFYC exploring this).